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ONLY A GIRL'S HEART.*

A MYSTERY OF HADDON'S FERRY.

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BLACK MAGIC.

"THE scene that followed? Oh, Heaven, the scene that followed! When I saw the inhuman savage clutch my Lily with such ruthless violence that she shrank and moaned under his talons, with a desperate bound I threw off the two men who held me, sprang upon the beast, hurled him from his prey, and gathered her to my bosom.

"Ah, poor fluttering dove! She had but an instant's respite.

"With hue and cry they set upon me—Hiram Slaughter, the constables and the men of the house, whom they loudly called to their aid. Lily was torn from me. I was beaten down, overpowered, and handcuffed as if I had been a convicted felon.

"One of the women of the house was sent to our room to fetch Lily's hat and sack. When these were brought and put on the pale, trembling child by one of the girls, Hiram Slaughter strode forward, seized his victim, and jerked her hand within his arm to lead her away.

"Then she turned upon me such a look —oh! Such a look of heavenly love and trust, as, rising above all weakness, she said:

"'Take courage, dear husband. In ten days I shall be of age, and then no one will have a right to stay me, and I will come to you; for let them say what they will, I know that I am your own wedded wife.'

"'*Take that*, you impudent jade!' roared Hiram Slaughter, striking her full upon the mouth with his open hand, and

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with such force, that her blood followed the blow.

“I was maddened by the sight. I struggled with my captors, like the maniac that I was! I railed on Hiram Slaughter like any drunkard! Ah, how futile were all my efforts!

“She held a white handkerchief to her wounded lips, to absorb the blood, and looked at me with eyes full of compassion.

“Oh, how miserable and contemptible I seemed to myself, in my utter helplessness to help her! When I realized this, I shamed my manhood and wept!

“Then her sweet voice spoke again:

“‘Yet still be patient, dear Gabriel. What can they do to us, after all? They can but torture or kill the body, and “after that they have no more that they can do.”

They cannot separate our spirits even in this world. They can never really part us, who are one forever.’

“As she spoke, from moment to moment she had to pause to put the white handkerchief to her bleeding lips.

“‘Lily! Oh, would Heaven I could die

to save you, my love—my love!' I cried out, in the extremity of my anguish.

"'Live to bless me, dear Gabriel, as I shall live to love you,' she earnestly answered.

"Hiram Slaughter jerked her forward, shook her with violence and pushed her into the carriage.

"I struggled frantically to loose my hands, to throw off the men that held me and to go to her rescue, but all in vain.

"'Why do you not arrest that savage monster for assault and battery upon that delicate girl?' I thundered into the ears of my captors.

"'She is a minor in the hands of her guardian. She has rebelled against his authority, and he has a lawful right to chastise her. If she was a daughter of mine, I would give her a good whipping,' said one of the officers.

"'You see we can't interfere. Besides, we have got enough to do to take care of you,' added the other, who seemed to be a 'milder-mannered' man.

"Meanwhile, Hiram Slaughter had followed his white slave into the carriage, which was immediately driven off up the river road toward Alexandria.

"Between the two constables I was led away unresistingly now, in the very collapse of despair. A sort of prison van awaited us on the road. We entered it, and followed the first carriage.

"Oh, my dear Gertrude, let me hurry over this black page in my book of life! Guiltless as I was then, wiser as I have become now, I cannot look back upon it without shame and horror.

"I was taken before a magistrate in Alexandria, where I met my accuser and the fair bride, whom I was accused of having abducted from the township of Wildeville and illegally married in Alexandria.

"Fortunately for my delicate Lily, it was at an hour of the forenoon when all the morning 'cases' had been disposed of and the magistrate was alone in his office, except for the attendance of his clerk and one or two constables.

"Our hearing was, therefore, comparatively private.

"Hiram Slaughter was as wily as he was ferocious. All his violence disappeared in the presence of the magistrate. He sat on a side bench near the official table with Lily, deeply vailed, beside him. His arm was around her waist. He seemed to hold was around her waist. He seemed to hold her more as a pet than a prisoner. He told his story with the greatest exaggeration, yet with the utmost coolness. By his statement I was made to appear the most unprincipled knave and my wife the most infatuated fool on the face of the earth. From that start the magistrate was biased against me.

"When my turn came, I told my own story and Lily's in our justification, but without effect. If justice and humanity were on our side, law and the magistrate seemed clearly on our antagonist's.

"After a very brief examination, Lily, my bride, was given into the custody of her guardian, and I was committed to jail to await the action of the sheriff of Wildeville.

"Lily fainted, and was borne away in an unconscious condition by her grandfather.

"I was taken off to prison, and for the first time in all my life I saw the inside of a jail and as a prisoner.

"I keenly felt the degradation that had fallen upon me; but, oh, how much more keenly the horrors that awaited my helpless wife. I was utterly overwhelmed and prostrated by anguish and despair. I supposed that Hiram Slaughter had taken Lily back to Wildeville. With a desperate effort I aroused myself at length to write to my poor mother, inclosing a letter to Lily, which I begged her to try to forward secretly and get an answer if she could.

“I sent off this double letter, but before there was time to get a reply the sheriff's officers came to Wildeville with warrants and carried me back thither to answer to the charge of having abducted a minor. Gertrude! When I was committed to the Alexandria jail my hair and beard were golden red. A week later, when I was taken out to be conveyed to Wildeville, they were silver-white.”

“And that was the black magic that turned the gold to silver?” said the young girl, compassionately.

“It was, my child. To go on: The day after I was committed to the Wildeville prison, my poor mother came to see me. She looked pale and worn with sorrow and anxiety. She evidently controlled her feelings for the sake of comforting me;

but when she saw from the change that had passed over me what a terrible ordeal I had gone through even already, she was quite overcome with emotion for a time, after which she rallied sufficiently to tell me that she had received my letter, but had failed in her efforts to have its inclosed note conveyed to Lily.

“ Lily, she told me, was ill at Hill Top House, and that Doctor Wedderburn was attending her. I was not at all surprised to hear this, but I was not less afflicted at the tale. My mother had brought some comforts in the form of clean linen and bed-clothing to help to render my imprisonment a little more endurable. She told me, further, for my encouragement, that she would take care of our place, and the hired man, John Young, could manage the ferry very well until my release; for she seemed to have no doubt that I should be acquitted.

“ My mother stayed until it was time to close the prison doors for the night, and then she commended me to the care of Heaven and departed. She visited me every day for the few days that I remained in the Wildeville jail.

“The court was sitting, and there were but few cases on the docket. I was, therefore, soon brought to trial. I had the best counsel I could procure, but it availed me little; for though justice and humanity were clearly on my side, the law of the land and the prejudices of rank seemed against me. The trial was very short. I was arraigned on the Monday following my arrival at Wildeville, and I was convicted and sentenced on Tuesday. The penalty of my so-called felony was two years' imprisonment, with hard labor, in the State penitentiary at Richmond. I was carried down the next day. My heart-broken mother stayed with me as much as she could, accompanying me down to the city, and never leaving me until the doors of the prison had closed upon me. Even then she took a room in the neighborhood, that she might be near me and visit me as often as she might be permitted to do so, which was only once a month.

“I was not put to very hard labor, for I happened to be the only educated prisoner in the penitentiary at that time; so I was assigned to duty in the warden's office, where I did nine-tenths of the work for which he received the salary; but it was light for me in comparison with other prison labor. Nevertheless, I did not rejoice at it, neither should I have complained if I had been put to the severest toil, for I was past complaining, as I was past enjoying then. My wife, my liberty, my good name had all been wrested from me, and all minor conditions of good or evil were unfelt.

"The term of my imprisonment commenced on my thirtieth birthday, the fatal 15th of July, just fifteen years after I had first met the child Lily; the day, also, upon which she became of age, when she had vowed to come to me and be my wife as sure as she should live. She lived; but, alas! she was at the point of death with a low fever, and much more likely to cross the dark river than to take any other journey. I had no means of hearing from her, since no letters of mine could reach her in her guarded seclusion, even if I had been permitted to write before the end of the month, which, of course, I was not.

"On the 1st of August, the regular

visiting day, my poor mother came to see me. I then intrusted a letter to her and begged her to journey back to Wildeville and inquire about my Lily, find out whether she were living or dead, and try, if she were living, to get that letter conveyed to her hands.

"My dear mother started on her mission. What would she not have done for her imprisoned son? She was gone a week, and at the end of that time she returned. She could not visit me until the next regular visiting day, on the 1st of September; but she sought an interview with the prison chaplain, through whose kindness I at length received news of Lily—bitter sweet!

"She had recovered from her dangerous illness, thank heaven; but she had been taken away from Hill Top House by General Slaughter, and no one knew or even surmised whither they had gone. This was the sum and substance of the intelligence brought from Wildeville by my mother and given me by the kind-hearted chaplain.

"My poor mother never ceased in her efforts to get me pardoned out; but we had a stern martinet for a governor, and he had lately entered upon his office, so there was no hope for me but in outliving my term of imprisonment. One weary month followed another and brought the winter.

"Christmas is a time when all travellers like to be at home. I thought General Slaughter would be no exception to the rule; so in Christmas week I sent my mother up to Wildeville again to inquire concerning Lily. She returned in time to visit me on the 1st of January, with the perplexing news that General Slaughter and his ward were still absent, in what part of the world no one knew.

"The winter passed away. My mother visited me every month, and brought me, also, such comforts and conveniences as the prison-rules or the warden's indulgence would allow me to receive.

"Early in the spring, my mother went again on a pilgrimage to Wildeville; but returned, as before, with the disappointing information that General Slaughter and his ward had not returned, and had not been heard from by anybody but Oxman, his overseer, who declined to reveal his where-ferry, she arranged with our assistant ferryman John to glean all the information concerning the 'Slaughter House,' as Hill Top Hall now began to be called, and to get the village schoolmaster to write a letter, at John's dictation, once a month to convey the intelligence to us. This was to save the trouble and expense of her quarterly visits to Wildeville, as well as to obtain more frequent news.

"Our ferryman did his duty and kept us posted as to the existence of 'no news' whatever.

"So the spring ripened into summer and brought the 14th of July, the day before the anniversary of my entrance into the penitentiary, half the term of my imprisonment; and every day would make the coming year shorter, and bring me nearer to the day of release.

"But where was my Lily? How was she? What was she doing? She knew, of course, that I was a prisoner; but *I* knew that if she were free, she would hasten to Richmond, share the humble home of my mother, and with her visit me every month during the term of my confinement. Her failure to do this kept me on the rack

Her failure to do this kept me on the rack of anxiety, and my greatest longing for liberty was for her sake, that I might constitute myself a detective for the discovery of her abode and a deliverer for the emancipation of herself.

"On the evening of this 14th of July the warden brought me a great piece of news, an unexpected stroke of good fortune. He told me that I was to be pardoned out; that the pardon was to take effect the next morning, when, after some formalities, I should be set at liberty. Oh, the joy that filled my heart! For the moment, every ill was forgotten, everything was forgotten but that I should be free in the morning! My poor mother's exertions, petitions and representations, like seed sown and forgotten, had produced a harvest of success when we least expected it. It seems that even the stern martinet, Governor ——, had perceived the injustice and tyranny of my incarceration, and released me as soon as he prudently could—at the close of my first year of imprisonment. With the warden's permission, I sent for my mother, and saw her alone in the warden's parlor and told her the joyous news, and we re-

"We made arrangements for our departure for Wildeville the next day. She undertook to pack up all her own effects and such of mine as remained in her possession, and also to bring me a new suit of clothes and a wig; for I had not escaped the convict's degradation of the shaved head. I had nothing of my own in the prison but a few religious books, and these I preferred to donate to the prison library.

"It was late when my mother took leave of me—the happiest leave-taking we had enjoyed for many a month.

"I retired to my cell and was locked in as usual for the night. I went to bed, or, rather, I stretched myself upon my hard cot-pallet; but I could not sleep. Although in a prison cell, I was too happy and too much excited to sleep, for the next morning I should be free! Free to go forth into the world again; free to seek my Lily. Did I doubt that I should find her? Oh, no! I was too full of delight to doubt anything. I believed in all blessed possibilities. I should find my Lily, would let the ferry, and I would take her and my dear mother, and we would go away to some distant pleasant land, where our troubles had never been heard of by other people, and where our sorrows would be forgotten even by ourselves. In my exaltation of hope, I felt just as sure that all this would happen as that to-morrow's sun would rise Full of these happy thoughts, I could not sleep. I lay in a delightful reverie, gazing through the little grated window of my cell, gazing out upon the star-lit sky above and its reflection in the clear bosom of the James below. I heard the prison-clock strike every hour until midnight. When it struck twelve, I exclaimed aloud:

"'This is the day, the blessed day, that gives me liberty!'

"It really appeared to me then as if I had been in prison nearly all my life, and this was the first day of freedom. I lay in a happy half-trance until I heard the clock strike one.

"Now, my dearest Gertrude, what next followed was so strange, so mysterious, so incredible, indeed, that if it had not been corroborated by subsequent circumstances I could not have believed it then, nor could I ask you to believe it now."

The ferryman dropped his head upon his chest and fell into a deep trance-like reverie, that lasted until Gertrude, whose intense curiosity rendered her impatient of delay, roused him by asking:

"Dear grandpa, what was it that happened to you on the night of the 14th of July?"

CHAPTER XII.

"A VISION PASSED BEFORE ME."

"It was the morning of the 15th, child. It was after one o'clock, Gertrude. Call it a dream, vision, hallucination—anything you please—but I was awake, wide awake, vividly wide awake when it happened.

"I had heard the clock strike one while I lay gazing out, through the little grated window, upon the cool night scene—the clear, star-lit sky reflected on the broad, dark river; and then I closed my eyes and lay in a delightful reverie, thinking of the morning just come, when I should be free; of the days soon coming when I should be reunited with Lily; and in the midst of this delightful day-dreaming I heard a sweet, soft, clear voice murmur in my ear:

"'*Gabriel.*'

"The voice thrilled my soul, for it was the voice of my beloved. But the next instant a tender awe fell upon me as I opened my eyes and inquired, as if in doubt:

"'Who called me?'

"I listened intently, but there was no reply. I gazed around, but there was no one visible—nothing to be seen but the bare walls of my six-by-eight prison-cell, and the little grated window in the wall, against which my narrow cot stood. Yet I knew that I had not dreamed or imagined that voice. I knew that I had heard it! I closed my eyes again, and lay intently listening, breathlessly expectant, yet, withal, strangely awed and calmed. The voice spoke again, sweet, soft, low, clear and close to my ear:

"'Gabriel, I come.'

"I lifted my eyelids suddenly and glanced around. Nothing was to be seen but the white-washed walls of my cell, dimly visible in the faint light of the little grated window. I called aloud. Nothing was to be heard but the weird sighing of the wind. I now began to perceive that nothing would respond to me, while all my senses were open and on the alert; thus I closed my eyes for the last time and kept them closed, waiting in breathless awe for what might next happen.

"The heavenly voice breathed once more, low, clear, flute-like:

"'Husband, I am here.'

"'Lily! Love! Wife!' I aspirated, faint between delight and awe.

"The sweet voice spoke no more; but as if my recognition of it had evoked the vision, this is what appeared before my sealed eyes:

"A soft, white light, that dilated and brightened until its radiance filled the cell; and this radiance seemed to proceed from the form of my Lily, who stood in the midst of it, her face beaming with celestial beauty, her brows crowned with a wreath of orange-blossoms, her hair, silver in the sunshine and golden in the shade, flowing over her shoulders, her form enveloped as in a silvery mist in bridal robe and vail.

"As I gazed in an ecstasy of rapture that caught away my breath and stopped my pulse, the celestial vision faded away, the radiant light paled, the cell grew dark, and I lapsed into a state of complete unconsciousness.

"It seemed to me only the next instant that I was aroused by a violent shaking from a strong arm and calling from a loud voice. I started up, bewildered, to see one of the turnkeys standing over me and the sun shining broadly through the little grated window and throwing a small square of golden light, checked with black lines, on the floor. It seemed to me that, only a second before, I had lain in the midst of a heavenly vision at one o'clock in the morning, and now I lay staring at the stupid face of the turnkey in the full glare of day. I was so confounded that I could not speak.

"'What the deuce is the matter with you? Are you sick? Has the doctor given you opium, that you sleep so long and wake so dull? Get up. The prisoners are all forming to go to breakfast!' exclaimed the man.

"I sprang off my hard cot-pallet, doused my head and face from the stone jug of water that stood on the floor, and followed my guard, to join the line of convicts on their march to the prison eating-room. But my mind was so completely absorbed with the thought of the vision I had seen that I could think of nothing else, not even of my freedom just at hand.

"Immediately after breakfast, I was summoned to the warden's office, where I found the sheriff waiting for me, with the governor's pardon in his hand. He read the document to me, and then warmly shook me by the hand, congratulating me upon my deliverance, and going so far out of his official routine as to say that he believed it to be an act of justice that ought to have been done a year before, when the injustice of my conviction and sentence by the Wildeville court had been perpetrated.

"I thanked the sheriff cordially for his kind words, but told him, at the same time, that I knew the great wrong which had been done me could never be righted in this world.

"While we were still speaking, my poor mother was shown into the office, bearing a large bundle in her hand. She greeted every one with a smile, as she took the chair the warden placed for her. The sheriff congratulated her also; but, instead of answering him, she burst into tears and wept. I knew what was passing in her mind; for, after the first shock of delight at unexpectedly recovered freedom, I felt that she, like myself, was overshadowed by the reflection that we should always live under the reproach of my conviction and imprisonment, however undeserved it might be and certainly was.

"We waited until some legal forms passed between the warden and the sheriff, and then I was informed that I was at liberty to depart.

"My mother handed me the bundle that she had brought, and I took it and retired to change my prison uniform for a citizen's dress.

"When I had done this I returned to the warden's office, where my mother still waited for me. We then took leave of the officers and left the prison.

"A carriage was waiting for us at the gates with a large trunk, containing all our effects, strapped behind it.

"'I have taken two places in the stage-coach that leaves this morning, and it is now only half-past eight. We have plenty of time to get to the office and get them,' said my mother, as the carriage started.

"I pressed her hand, but said nothing; my thoughts were still absorbed in the vision I had seen, to the exclusion of all other subjects.

"In due time we reached the stage-office and got into our seats in the coach. Every other seat was taken. It was crowded with passengers, men, women and children, chiefly tourists, escaping from the heat of the city to the shades of the forests and the coolness of the mountains. Happily they were all strangers to us. Three days of laborious travel—changing horses every eight hours at the way-stations or post-houses, as they were then called, stopping three times a day for meals, and sometimes losing old passengers and gaining new ones—brought us at length to Wildeville late in the evening of the third day.

"There were few loiterers at that hour around the village inn; yet it was gratifying to see the genuine pleasure with which they greeted my unexpected return. It was evident that my old neighbors looked upon imprisonment more as an unmerited martyrdom than as a disgraceful punishment.

"We did not linger there to receive the somewhat mixed condolements and congratulations of our friends, but procured the use of the tavern hack and its driver and set out on our road to Wildeville. It was the same carriage, the same driver and the same road over which I had travelled little more than a year before with my bride. Then we were going away together, a happy and expectant bride and bridegroom; now I was returning a pardoned convict!

"After two hours' ride we reached the ferry at the foot of the Eagle's Roost Cliff, and I got out of the hack and blew the horn and gave the familiar call:

"'*Boat!*'

"'All right!' came booming across the river in response. Meanwhile, Zebedee, the driver, took off our trunk and sat it on the ground, received the money for the use of the carriage from me, bowed, remounted his seat and drove off on his return road, for the hour was late and he was anxious to get home.

"We stood on the brink of the river.

"It was very dark; it was like the ideal river of death. The towering black mountains hid all the horizon, and the few stars that twinkled at an immeasurable height in the zenith were but dimly reflected in the dark waters beneath. But as we stood and watched, we saw a light leave the opposite shore, and we knew that our boat was coming. The light steadily approached us, and soon we heard the welcome dip of oars; and soon afterward the boat was pushed ashore and our faithful John stood up in it, saying:

"'Here I am, at your service, gentlemen,' and he held the lantern up to see who his passengers might be, but dropped it in amazement as he met my eyes, and exclaimed:

"'Great Heaven, Mr. Haddon!'

"'Help me to put the trunk in the boat, John,' I said, as calmly as I could speak in reply.

"He obeyed me, greeting my mother with a bow as he passed her.

"When we were all in the boat, and John had taken the oars, pushed it from the shore and was rowing us rapidly over the river, I spoke:

"'You did not expect me, John?'

"'Who—I, sir? No, sir; no more than anybody else did: but I 'm powerful glad to see you, sir, all the same, as everybody else will. I tell you what, Mr. Haddon: It was a good thing for old Slaughter that the men about here didn't know as much while he was in the neighborhood as they know now; for if they *had*, they 'd have burnt down his old Slaughter-House over his head. But they didn't know anything about it until after he had gone away and taken Miss Lily with him. Then the servants' tongues were let loose, and the way they *did* talk would ha' made an oyster's hair stand on end. We found out all the black-hearted old beast done to Miss Lily, sir, begging your pardon.'

"'Where is "Miss Lily" now?' I inquired, anxiously.

"'Lord knows, sir! The old savage took her away near twelve months ago, and nobody knows where they are. But I tell you what, sir: It would be dangerous for that old brute to come back here, and maybe he knows it. Why, Lor', sir, Mr. Haddon, you would only have to give a hint to have a hundred determined men at your heels, to go and burn the Slaughter House over old Slaughter's head, and *him* in it! Why, sir, the heart of the country *rages* against him for what he done to Miss Lily and you.'

“ As my faithful helper delivered himself of this tirade, the boat touched the shore and we landed. I was ‘home again.’

“ John secured the boat, and then helped me to carry the trunk up to the house, my mother preceding us.

“ The dogs broke out into a fury of barking, but as soon as they recognized us they apologized and fawned in the most abject and affectionate manner. We took our devoted old Jess by surprise, but found her as much rejoiced as astonished at our unexpected arrival at home.

“ She prepared for us a good supper and comfortable beds; and, in about an hour from our entrance into the house, we had been refreshed by a wash and a meal, and we stretched our wearied frames on our beds, for the first time in four nights. Conquered by extreme bodily fatigue, I slept until late in the morning. My mother also had slept well, but had risen early.

“ This was Sunday morning. I told my mother at breakfast that I would go to church with her that day, but on the next day, Monday, I should commence my search for Lily. I went with her to the

Old Red Sandstone Church at the mouth of the Whirl, and engaged with all my heart in the religious services there. After the benediction was given and we had left the church, we were pleased to see the number of our friends who came around us in the churchyard with greetings of welcome and congratulation. It seemed that I had lost no ground at all in the esteem and affection of our neighbors, who all regarded my condemnation as a great persecution rather than a just penalty.

"We returned home much encouraged by the confidence of our friends.

"The next morning I arose early, intending to commence my investigations at Hill Top Hall, and at Wildeville, in order, if possible, to obtain a clue that I might follow to a successful termination.

"While I was dressing, there came over the river the sound of a ferry-horn, followed by the usual cry of:

"'*Boat!*'

"Knowing that John was on duty, I gave myself no trouble about this, but proceeded with my toilet. I had not quite finished, however, when John came in and said:

"'I'm afraid I shall have to ask your help, sir. The party on the other side has two carriages and six horses, besides heavy trunks and boxes, so that we shall have to take over the great flat-boat.'

"'Very well, John, I will join you in a moment,' I said, as I hurriedly finished dressing and followed him down to the ferry-house.

"We soon got out the flat-boat and got her afloat. As we neared the opposite shore we perceived that the carriages stood, the one behind the other, at the base of the Eagle's Roost Cliff. The foremost carriage was black and drawn by black horses. The hindmost carriage we could not see distinctly. As we touched the beach, we saw that the two coachmen on the boxes were in deep mourning; then that the foremost carriage contained two male passengers, also in deep mourning, finally that the hindmost carriage was really *a hearse with a coffin in it!* The sight struck cold to my heart—notwithstanding that a funeral party was not so very unusual a fare to take across the ferry, "John stepped on shore and told the coachman that the boat was ready. The coachman nodded gravely and drove down upon the flat-boat.

"The hearse followed slowly in the same direction. Then two mounted grooms, in deep mourning, paced their horses soberly on to the boat.

"When all was ready, we pushed off from the shore. I gazed around upon the party; but the attendants, the two coachmen and the two grooms were all strangers to me.

"I glanced at the carriage; but the gentleman within it had pulled down the curtain, so that I could not see him.

"Then I had to give all my attention to the oars. It was a heavy and laborious ferriage. We were about twice the usual time in crossing the river; but we reached the home-shore at last.

"The carriage was the first to leave the ferry-boat and take the road up the mountain-pass.

"The hearse was about to follow, when I went to the side of it and inquired of the driver:

“ ‘Whose body lies within there?’

“He pointed to the coffin, indicating that I might read the inscription.

“Very reverently I looked in the side of the hearse and read the inscription on the silver plate. I read—oh, heaven of heavens! —I read:

LILY,
ONLY DAUGHTER OF
ALVAN AND ELLA VALE.
BORN, JULY 15, 18—;
DIED —

“I fell, as if struck by lightning.”

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 51.]